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are steamed until pliable, when they are dressed and colored. Often the small, cheap birds are cut up, and the parts patched together in imitation of some pretentious songster. The dyeing is a secret process; and the birds are so manipulated, that often a Hoosier jay is palmed off as the rarest warbler of the tropics. This year, owls promise to become popular west. East they are already worn by the leaders of fashion. You may look for them upon the streets here soon.

"The profits of this business are very large. The Indianapolis collectors pay from seven to twenty-five cents each for the skins of jays and yellow-hammers, and from twenty-five cents to a dollar for owls. An expert skinner can prepare from fifteen to twenty-five an hour; and, if birds are easily found, he easily, therefore, makes money at the business. Prepared for the milliners, the birds (exclusive of owls) cost, on an average, from twenty-five to forty cents: they are sold to milliners at from a dollar to a dollar and a half, and the milliners retail them at two dollars and three dollars and a half. At the factories cheap labor is employed. Girls at two dollars and three dollars a week are competent to do all that is required in preparing the birds for use."

There are some statements in the above which I doubt; but, having no statistics to the contrary at hand, I have given them without comment.

The law of Indiana for the protection of its song-birds is farcical in its language, and is rarely enforced. It enumerates the species which are intended to be protected; but so many English birds are included, that one is forced to smile at the very thought of it.

Amos W. Butler.

Brookville, Ind., March 1.

### A recent ice-storm.

I think that the answer given by Mr. Philbrick (*Science*, vii. 220), concerning the injury done to trees during the ice-storm of Feb. 11–13, is hardly sufficient to account for the facts. So far as I have been able to learn, the damage was most severe in localities along the coast, north of Boston. In this immediate vicinity the mutilation was excessive. The poplars suffered by far the most, and the elms sustained nearly as great injury, and after them would come the red-oaks, pitch-pines, maples, and white-pines. The birches were little affected, and the apples and horse-chestnuts not at all. In some cases the poplar trunks were left nearly bare. The uppermost limbs of the elms sustained greater injury than those lower down, as Mr. Davis indicated. I attribute that mainly to their position. They caught and held so much of the rain, as it fell, that the accumulation of ice was much less on the branches beneath. My observations have not shown much splitting at the point of bifurcation. A careful examination of an extensive area has shown that most of the broken limbs of the elms were twisted off, with splintering of the wood for several inches, and only occasionally one was found which had been broken off squarely. It seems clear that this result was brought about by a want of symmetry in the horizontal subdivisions of the branches. When such branches were well loaded with ice, gravity not only bent them downwards, but also produced a considerable torsional effect at a point usually quite near their union with the trunk. The apples and the horse-chestnuts seem to have escaped by reason of the fewness of their small limbs.

L. A. Lee.

Bowdoin college, Brunswick, Me., March 6.

### Apropos to Pteranodon and Homo.

Professor Holder's explanation that the human figure was simply put with Pteranodon for the sake of comparison of size, reminds me that some years ago I got from the cretaceous deposit of my neighborhood enough fossil material to diagnose a new species of reptile, which, although with powerful paddles, was almost pythonic in structure, and warranted the belief that the animal was hardly less than twenty-five feet long. As an Irish digger had struck upon the relics, and the too general habit is to destroy rather than save these finds, I succeeded in enthusing the laborers by drawing a restoration of this 'sea-serpent,' to their amazement. This the boss digger had framed and suspended in his cottage. To my sorrow, the thing made me famous, for it became so much talked about that reporters came from the great city. A pictorial journal sent an artist, who borrowed my crude sketch, and elaborated it under his own conceptions. Judge of my surprise when, with full credit to my name, the said journal appeared with an account of the resurrected ancient sea-serpent, and an engraving of the same, sporting in the ocean, and in the distance a three-masted ship in full sail! As in Professor Holder's case, there was no explanation given that the ship "was introduced in the cut to give people some idea of the size of the animal."

Samuel Lockwood.

Freehold, N.J., March 5.

### Is the dodo an extinct bird?

Has the guardianship of the 'mysteries of theosophy,' or his concern for the social organism of the world, lest they escape him (see Washington *Weekly star*, Nov. 20, 1885), so far rendered my aged friend, Dr. Coues, insensible to the progress of American ornithology, or current ornithological literature, as to have him overlook the fact, that, twenty days previous to my propounding the above question in *Science*, I had said in the *Century magazine*, "Of all the birds extirpated within the last few centuries, none can claim an equal share of interest with the famous dodo" (January, 1886)?

Since I published my opinion in the *Century*, many, many people — not naturalists, but those who take interest in such things — have asked me whether science was absolutely certain of the extinction of the dodo, as many quite recent popular works upon natural history have it that it may still be found in Madagascar. It was for these estimable people that I asked the question in *Science;* and fortunate indeed are they, that it has been answered for them by one of the leading ornithologists of this country, and in whose opinion, upon this point at least, I have most certainly always concurred.

R. W. Shufeldt.

Fort Wingate, N. Mex., Feb. 25.

### Chinook winds.

Warm west winds answering to the 'Chinook' winds occur as far south as southern Colorado, though I have seldom heard the name 'Chinook' applied to them in this region. They are here often called Pacific winds, also 'snow-eaters' and 'zephyrs.' They are the most violent winds we have at this place, as we are sheltered from the northers.

G. H. Stone.

Colorado Springs.